

HOUSE No. 4288

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, July 18, 2012.

The committee on Education to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 2712) of Cheryl A. Coakley-Rivera and others for the establishment of a youth solutions commission (including members of the General Court) to review youth employment, education pathways and efforts to reduce violence and dropout rates in an integrated, coordinated and cost-effective manner, reports recommending that the accompanying bill (House, No. 4288) ought to pass.

For the committee,

ALICE HANLON PEISCH.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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In the Year Two Thousand Twelve
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An Act improving coordination of the youth workforce development system in the Commonwealth.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. A Youth Workforce Solutions Commission shall be established to identify youth
2 workforce best practices and programs nationwide and to evaluate programs currently supported
3 by the commonwealth.

4 The commission shall consist of 22 members: 2 of whom shall be the chairs of the joint
5 committee on education, or their designees, one of whom shall serve as co-chair; 2 of whom
6 shall be the chairs of the joint committee on labor and workforce development, or their
7 designees, one of whom shall serve as co-chair; 2 of whom shall be the chairs of the joint
8 committee on higher education, or their designees; 1 of whom shall be appointed by the minority
9 leader of the house; 1 of whom shall be appointed by the minority leader of the senate; 1 of
10 whom shall be the president of the Commonwealth Corporation, or his designee; 1 of whom shall
11 be a representative of the Massachusetts Workforce Board Association; 1 of whom shall be a
12 representative of the Massachusetts Workforce Professionals Association; 1 of whom shall be a
13 representative of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents; 1 of whom shall be a

14 representative of the Massachusetts Community Action Network; 1 of whom shall be a
15 representative of YouthBuild; 1 of whom shall be a representative of the Center for Labor
16 Market Studies at Northeastern University; 1 of whom shall be a representative of the
17 Massachusetts AFL/CIO; 1 of whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts High
18 Technology Council; 1 of whom shall be an expert in dropout prevention and recovery to be
19 appointed by the governor; 1 of whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts Association
20 of Vocational Administrators; and 3 of whom shall be experienced in successful youth workforce
21 program efforts including, without limitation, public schools, the nonprofit sector, law
22 enforcement or municipally-administered after-school and recreation programs, to be appointed
23 by the governor.

24 SECTION 2. The Youth Workforce Solutions Commission shall be responsible for reviewing
25 existing program strategies in youth employment, education pathways, and efforts to reduce
26 violence and dropout rates, including school-to-career connecting activities, youth-at-risk
27 programs for year-round employment in all workforce regions, and grants for community safety
28 initiatives. The commission shall propose adoption of policies, laws, regulations and/or other
29 actions necessary to establish an effective youth workforce system in the Commonwealth, with a
30 focus on providing services and programs in an integrated, coordinated, and cost-effective
31 manner. The commission should seek to achieve the maximum level of coordination and co-
32 investment among the agencies, organizations, and industries involved in youth employment and
33 development in the commonwealth.

34 SECTION 3. The commission shall examine and make recommendations on: (1) better
35 coordination among dropout prevention and recovery programs, alternative education, youth
36 safety initiatives, postsecondary education opportunities, and summer and year-round youth

37 employment programs; (2) youth transitions from summer employment to year-round
38 employment or internship programs; (3) qualities and factors for youth employment programs
39 that have had consistent success in increasing high school graduation rates for at-risk youth; (4)
40 improved connections between high schools and postsecondary education programs in high-
41 demand sectors, between high schools and postsecondary work opportunities, and between
42 community colleges and four year institutions, whether through articulation agreements or other
43 means,; (5) linkages between non-profit, public-private, and other organizations and private
44 employers to ensure youth have access to private sector jobs; (6) an apprenticeship system with
45 private sector employers; (7) implementing the recommendations of the Massachusetts
46 Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery Commission, established under Chapter 315
47 of the Acts of 2008, related to youth workforce issues; (8) policies to encourage after-school and
48 out-of-school programs to connect youth with community-based experiences outside of an
49 educational setting; and (9) tracking the long-term effects of youth employment and out-of-
50 school time programs through wage record matching and graduation rate reporting.

51 SECTION 4. The commission shall conduct its first meeting not less than 90 days after the
52 effective date of this act and shall conduct not less than 3 public hearings in geographically
53 diverse regions of the Commonwealth. The commission shall submit a report of its findings and
54 recommendations together with legislation, if any, to the clerks of the house of representatives
55 and the senate who shall forward the same to the house and senate chairs of the joint committee
56 on education and the chairs of the house and senate committees on ways and means not later than
57 July 31, 2013.